

REMARKS

Status of the Claims

The Office Action dated December 15, 2005 has been received and its contents carefully considered. In the Office Action, claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Omata et al.* (US 6,442,356 B2).

By this reply, claims 1 and 6 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-18 are pending in this application.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Title

The Examiner stated that the title of the invention was not descriptive. The title has been amended as follows: COLOR IMAGE FORMING APPARATUS AND A METHOD FOR OPERATING. The new title is indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed. It is believed that the title is in compliance.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by *Omata et al.* (US 6,442,356 B2). Without conceding the propriety of the rejection, independent claims 1 and 6 have been amended. It is respectfully submitted that *Omata et al.* does not teach, *inter alia*, an image forming apparatus comprising "each of said plurality of transfer units being contacted under pressure with each of said plurality of image carriers through an intermediate transfer body or recording material by the application of pressure when each of said plurality of transfer units is operating and not

contacting each of said plurality of image carriers when each of said plurality of transfer units is not operating... wherein... said control unit changes a speed control method for said plurality of driving units according to the kind of image” as recited in claim 1 and similarly in claim 6. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that *Omata et al.* does not teach, *inter alia*, a control method comprising “selectively actuating a transfer unit according to the kind of image...controlling the rotational speed of the image carrier based on the read correction information” as recited in claim 11.

A brief discussion of the invention is provided. In an image forming apparatus, such as one capable of forming color images, monochrome images and single color images, transfer units may be utilized in creating respective basic colors such as, for example, yellow, magenta, cyan and black. These transfer units may be selectively activated to form a desired image depending upon a kind of an original image. For example, when a monochrome image is formed, transfer units for basic colors of yellow, magenta and cyan are not used. Hence, a lifespan (e.g., resulting from non-use) of the photosensitive bodies and related developing agents for these basic colors may be prolonged. However, in an instance where selective activation of the transfer units depends upon the kind of images, a new problem may occur. A difficulty may arise in controlling the photosensitive bodies in rotation. This phenomenon may be attributed to a fluctuation of mechanical resonance frequency such as that related to the number of activated transfer units utilized, for example, in creating a desired image.

Hence, if the same control is always effected on the driving unit for driving a plurality of image carries, it may be difficult to accurately control a speed of the photosensitive bodies. The disclosed invention changes the speed control of the driving

unit depending upon the kind of images or the number of transfer units under pressurized contact with the photosensitive bodies in order to achieve selective control. Thus, the invention not only obtains images of high quality but also includes an appropriate drive control of photosensitive bodies which depend upon the kind of images.

Turning to the Office Action, *Omata et al.* discloses that a transfer current of the transfer means which is not being used is set to $0\mu\text{A}$ (e.g., column 8, lines 49-67 and column 9, lines 1-17). More particularly, when the primary charger 102 and the developing device 103 are not in operation, the current of the corresponding transfer means 105 which is not being used is set to $0\mu\text{A}$. However, *Omata et al.* does not teach or suggest activating a transfer unit via contact pressure with an image carrier during operation, as claimed. Additionally, *Omata et al.* does not disclose that the transfer unit is taken out of operation by being released from contact with the image carrier, as claimed. There is also no disclosure or arrangement taught by *Omata et al.* for changing the speed control of the photosensitive bodies depending upon the kind of image(s), as recited in claims 1, 6, or 11. Thus, *Omata et al.* teaches away from the invention, because no provision is made to selectively control the transfer unit based upon the kind of image which can prolong the lifespan of the photosensitive bodies and related developing agents.

For anticipation under 35 U.S.C. § 102, the reference must teach every aspect of the claimed invention either explicitly or impliedly. Any feature not directly taught must be inherently present (M.P.E.P. 706.02). Since each and every element, as set forth in the claims, are not found either expressly or inherently described as required by the

M.P.E.P., *Omata et al.* cannot be said to anticipate the invention as claimed. Hence, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-5 and 13-18 ultimately depend from independent claim 1 and are patentable over the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 7-10 ultimately depend from independent claim 6 and are patentable over the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 6.

Claim 12 depends from independent claim 11 and is patentable over the cited prior art for at least the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 11.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of the application are believed in order and such action is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite issuance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at 571-203-2735.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account no. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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